

Of all sanitary measures, that of prevention, or prophylaxis of contagious diseases, stands in the first rank; this has been fully verified by facts. It is admitted beyond question, and civic authorities look upon it as the corner stone in the foundation of public sanitation, in all civilised countries. International hygiene has its written laws, and the establishment of quarantine is the natural outcome of armed prevention—a peaceful measure if any—since its sole aim is to safeguard the life of the inhabitants within its limits, but nevertheless, a measure sanctioned by law and to which all travellers must submit.

Great centres of population do likewise in order to protect public health. Municipal hygiene has its rules and regulations which are enforced in every instance where civic authority has a right to intervene. Thus does it look after the purity of the water supply, the cleanliness of the streets, the sewerage system, and proper sanitation of houses, schools and manufacturing establishments, etc. This is as it should be, since its object is to prevent the spreading of epidemics and thus preserve the life of the rate payer.

But if international hygiene, under the control of governments, and municipal hygiene under the control of civic authorities, have created for physicians, positions worthy of the ambition of those wishing to make a speciality of hygiene, it is not for this particular reason that hygiene becomes of prime necessity for the general practitioner. He would certainly not be doing justice to his profession, if he were unable to second the efforts of the sanitary authorities; but it is not at the frontier, not at the city hall, that, in the ordinary course of things, a forcible and effective intervention is expected from him: *Where he must act, is in the home and in the family circle.* Hygiene, be it general, special or prophylactic, will furnish in this instance, as I stated heretofore, the surest means of maintaining health and prolonging life.

Allow me to enter more deeply into the matter.

*General Hygiene.*—If the health of the masses depends upon international or municipal hygiene, the health of the individual rests entirely upon domestic hygiene, and here it is we enter upon the field proper to the general practitioner.

Domestic hygiene has also its laws, any violation of which would be a source of great peril. The whole community, without exception, must abide by them to preserve their health, to develop and maintain intact their physiological functions. "Life," says Bichat, "is the concurrence of phenomena opposing the causes of death." To develop and preserve health, that is, life, is therefore, to increase the power of resistance and is altogether, the best method of prophylaxis. Have we not, for example, obtained splendid results by the proper care of children? It